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## **Annual Report Funding Year 2002-2003**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **Background**

Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per pack tax on cigarettes to support programs for expectant parents and children ages prenatal through age five (0-5).

First 5 Tehama County Children and Families Commission was established because of the passage of Proposition 10. The Commission began allocating direct service, capital improvement, and planning grant funding in July 2001 to enhance existing partnership resources and invest in new opportunities to improve the quality of life for Tehama County's youngest children and their families.

#### **Major Accomplishments in FY 2002-2003.**

##### **a. *Systems-level accomplishments***

This year a lot of effort was put into the development and submission of two proposals and one concept paper requesting additional funds from First 5 California for 1) School Readiness Program Funds and 2) Retention Incentives for Early Learning Staff Funds and to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for the 1) Local Initiative Funding Partners Program 2004. We received positive notification in August 2003 regarding both proposals to First 5 California and will begin the projects this fall. Concept paper notification will come in September 2003. If accepted, a scope of work will be developed in partnership with a community based organization creating Tehama County Early Childhood Connections which will link to and provide at-risk children, prenatal to five, with quality developmental, behavioral and psychosocial services.

The Commission also adopted a long range financial plan which ensures a 10 year financial commitment for children prenatal through age five and their families.

##### **b. *Program-level accomplishments***

###### Planning Efforts:

- ◆ **PROJECT: Employer Sponsored Child Care Assistance.** A plan was developed for employers to provide on-site child care or child care assistance programs.\* At the conclusion of the this planning grant, two Tehama County companies, one of which was already in the process of developing a child care center, formed an agreement to collaborate on a joint employer sponsored child care center to be located centrally to both businesses. A third company has expressed an interest in purchasing child care slots for their employees at this center once the facility has been developed and is fully functional. This child care and preschool facility will serve the families employed by these companies as well as the community at large. It will care for children 0-5 years of age as well as children after school.

#### Capital Improvements Efforts:

- ♦ **PROJECT: Creative Learning Center.** Funds were approved for developmentally appropriate indoor furnishings for an Employer-Sponsored/Community Child Care Center and Preschool that was developed due to efforts accomplished by First 5 Tehama funded Local Child Care Planning Council planning grant project. This child care and preschool facility will be the first of its kind in the county to be open during evening and night hours to accommodate parents who work late shifts.
- ♦ **PROJECT: Corning Infant and Toddler Center.** Continued monitoring efforts regarding outreach for the facility that was funded last year to offer expanded infant and toddler care center slots to ensure full enrollment. Teen parents are a target priority; services include parent education, health and social services for families.\*

#### Direct Services Efforts:

- ♦ **PROJECT: Informal Caregiver Home Visiting and Training Program.** Providing outreach, support and training activities for license-exempt child care providers and Spanish-speaking potential providers through home visits, workshops, technical assistance, media, and community presentations. Will work to increase parents, providers, and community knowledge of the benefits of quality child care, childhood development and healthy and safe home environments with an emphasis on school readiness.\*
- ♦ **PROJECT: Family Resource Center.** Expanded existing Family Resource Center in both capacity and delivery of services. Core services include parent education, child development activities, resource and referral, drop-in availability, peer-to-peer supports, and on-site child care.\*
- ♦ **PROJECT: Perinatal Education Program.** Bilingual/bicultural perinatal education program that serves women from prenatal period through six weeks postpartum with an emphasis on teen parents. “Kits for New Parents” will be utilized to develop curriculum and as a working tool throughout the series. Training of bilingual/bicultural staff for class instruction. Classes include breastfeeding, baby basics, six-week postpartum, childbirth, and water birth classes \*

\*Includes outreach and services to Latino and Spanish speaking children and their families.

#### **c. *Commission-level accomplishments***

##### Community Strengthening Efforts:

- ♦ **“Kit for New Parents” distribution and education:** The Commission trained distribution and referral partners on the many uses of the “Kit” including parent education, comprehensive resource, and program/curriculum augmentation. The Commission also utilized the “Kit” during Community events and fairs to promote education and awareness of First 5 Tehama activities, to provide information about the importance of the first five years and use of community resources.
- ♦ The Commission developed and distributed “A Guide for Parents of Young Children”. This too is a tool for parents and early care providers and also is used to promote education and awareness of First 5 Tehama activities and community resources. First 5 Tehama has partnered with multiple agencies, groups, and services providers to ensure as many families as possible with children 0-5 receive one.

##### System Change Support Activities through Results Based Accountability and Service Quality:

- ♦ The Commission provided funded programs with training, technical assistance, and support to conduct evaluations and use data. The Commission also adopted an evaluation design which incorporates First 5 California outcomes from the SRI International evaluation and the School

Readiness outcomes. Funded project's evaluation reporting and data collection systems were aligned with Prop 10 Evaluation Data System (PEDS) due to Commission staff and evaluation consultant efforts.

- ◆ The Commission assisted School Readiness Program applicants in conducting community asset mapping/needs assessment and in conducting research and editing for their proposals.
- ◆ The Commission also assisted funded programs in the development and monitoring of service quality standards. Funded projects are providing services and support in a more comprehensive, responsive, and effective manner.

### **Major Plans for FY 2003-2004.**

The Commission held its Annual Commission Workshop and Strategic Plan review on August 5, 2003 and confirmed its major plans for FY 2003-2004.

1. School Readiness Program implementation of the two funded projects: First Steps Learning Center and Gerber Family Center. These two projects were developed to improve the ability of families, schools, and communities to prepare children to enter school ready.
2. Child Care Retention Incentive (CRI) Program implementation. This project will provide incentives and services to caregivers county-wide expanding an existing First 5 Tehama funded outreach project that serves as the entry-level component of the plan by adding the CRI component level that includes licensed family child care provider and staff, Head Start staff, and center-based providers and staff.
3. Informal Caregiver Home Visiting and Training Program: Provides outreach, support and training activities for license-exempt child care providers and Spanish-speaking potential providers through home visits, workshops, technical assistance, media, and community presentations. Works to increase parents, providers, and community knowledge of the benefits of quality child care, childhood development, and healthy and safe home environments with an emphasis on school readiness.
4. Bilingual/bicultural Perinatal Education program: Serving women from prenatal period through six weeks postpartum including rural teen parents. Expanding services to Gerber and Los Molinos Elementary School Readiness sites and to Corning. "Kits for New Parents" are utilized to develop curriculum and as a working tool throughout the series. Classes include: Childbirth, Waterbirth, Baby Basics, Breastfeeding, and Six Week Postpartum.
5. Creative Learning Center: A case study of the Creative Learning Center collaboration will be written. Utilizing the success of the planning grant funded by First 5 Tehama in growing this site, the Commission will replicate similar planning efforts in South County with small employers.
6. Move forward with efforts to develop developmental and behavioral services using School Readiness programs as the principal platform for services, however, ultimately providing services countywide. The project goal would be to link to and provide at-risk children, prenatal to five, with quality developmental, behavioral, and psychosocial services.

Action planning was also developed at the Annual Commission Workshop for the following items:

- Community and Organization Capacity Building
- Improved Service Delivery
- Improved Funding Process

### **Outreach to Historically Underserved Populations.**

First 5 Tehama is aware that the issues facing the county are relatively common throughout the region and identified Spanish speakers, teen parents, parents who work late shifts, families with children who have

disabilities, geographically isolated families, and informal child care providers as underserved populations through our strategic planning process. Based on this knowledge, First 5 Tehama's fund allocation process required submitted proposals to reflect the following four principles:

1. Serve ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse children and families and special needs children and families;
2. Address the needs of geographically and socially isolated communities;
3. Target traditionally under-served/high-need populations;
4. Streamline access and removal of barriers to promote access.

The following funded strategies resulted in greater access to and quality of services for the identified underserved populations:

- ◆ Geographically isolated families & informal child care providers: Projects funded addressed this need directly providing funded services to specific rural areas or transporting families and children directly to the service. A van was leased for the Family Resource Center to increase access and one has been purchased to ensure access to an infant and toddler child care center. A home visitor provides direct services to informal care providers, and two parent education programs offer satellite services; one also has a satellite office. Because of this small bridge to services, parents and children have access to needed child care, parent education, and support services.
- ◆ Spanish speakers: Because one of the principles for First 5 Tehama is to serve ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse children and families; the direct service projects addressed this need through the hiring and training of bilingual/bicultural staff and the outreach home visiting program to licensed exempt providers uses a translator. One hundred percent (100%) of First 5 Tehama's activities reduced cultural and language barriers for families in Tehama County.
- ◆ Teen parents: Both the Family Resource Center and the bilingual/bicultural perinatal education program offer services and resources targeting teen parents. Both programs brought services directly to teen parents. An infant and toddler center expanded child care slots targeting teen parents, services also include parent education, health and social services.
- ◆ Families with children who have disabilities: The Family Resource Center offers services and resources targeting families with children who have disabilities. The employer based/community child care center and preschool will begin offering services in August 2003 and will also serve children with disabilities as does the infant and toddler child care center.
- ◆ Parents who work shifts: First 5 Tehama helped support the development of an employer based/community child care center and preschool which will begin offering services in August 2003 during regular and non-tradition hours of care (6am-2am) to accommodate parents who work late shifts.

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